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PROGRAMME AND RELATED QUESTIONS: CALENDAR OF CONFERENCES

Letter dated 26 May 1993 from the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences to the President of the Economic and Social Council

In response to the Council's invitation, as set forth in its decision 1988/103 of 5 February 1988, the Committee on Conferences met on 20 May 1993 to review the provisional calendar of conferences and meetings for 1994 and 1995 in the economic, social and related fields, as contained in document E/1993/L.20. The Committee welcomed the opportunity to review this draft calendar of conferences and to provide, as appropriate, its recommendations thereon to the Council.

In introducing the draft calendar, the Secretariat drew the attention of the Committee to what would appear to be a growing trend among the Council's subsidiary bodies to have annual, rather than biennial, sessions, which is a cause for concern in view of the limited Secretariat services available, inter alia, for meetings and documentation.

During the discussion of the item, the question of the biennialization of conferences and meetings referred to in recommendation 2 (b) of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations, as endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 41/213, was recalled. Concern was expressed regarding the increased requests of intergovernmental bodies to seek exceptions to the biennialization of their sessions, particularly in view of the fact that such requests did not result in sessions of shorter duration. The Committee wished to encourage the Council to continue its consideration of the biennialization of meetings of its subsidiary bodies.

* E/1993/100.

Moreover, the Committee on Conferences noted that, in accordance with Council resolution 1988/77 of 29 July 1988, paragraph 2 (f) (i), in the draft calendar submitted by the Secretary-General, the subsidiary bodies of the Council were, to the extent possible, scheduled to end their 1994-1995 sessions at least eight weeks prior to the scheduled dates for the Economic and Social Council.

The Committee also noted with appreciation the action taken by the Council in 1992 concerning the discontinuance of summary records for its sessional committees, as well as for some subsidiary bodies.

The Committee on Conferences recommended the adoption of the draft calendar of conferences and meetings, while noting that the venues of some bodies affected by the restructuring under General Assembly resolution 47/212 B of 6 May 1993 might be reviewed.

In closing, I should like to express the Committee's appreciation of the Council's invitation to review its draft calendar of conferences and meetings, and of the continued close cooperation between the Economic and Social Council and the Committee on Conferences.

(Signed) Mahmoud BARIMANI
Chairman
Committee on Conferences